

CDVA Disability Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 16, 2008 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Attendees: Jeremy Nasca, Diane Domino, Debra Lehr, Dolores Trujillo, Sue Rose-Wilson

- I. Revision of Committee Bylaws** – discussion of proposed changes to bylaws, including **composition changes** to committee:
- EEO Officer to permanently Chair committee to create stability and facilitate project completion;
 - Committee should elect Vice Chair and Secretary;
 - Committee to provide feedback on bylaws revision by July 31st, at which time the bylaws will be forwarded to the Secretary for review and approval;
 - Chair to meet with members' supervisors to discuss role of the DAC within the agency, inform them of the regular meeting schedule and ensure that members will be allotted the time necessary to attend meetings and/or conduct meeting business (no more than 4 hrs per month).
- II. Committee Priorities – 2008:**
- A. ADA Compliance –**
- Accessibility issues are a top priority right now at the state government level; there is a big push for agencies/departments to put plans into place for bringing structures and technologies into compliance with the requirements of the ADA. (In accordance with the ADA, all public buildings that were erected prior to 1993 must develop “transition plans” for compliance with the law.) Presently, CDVA Headquarters is not fully compliant with the requirements of the ADA; e.g., signage, restroom accessibility, building access for wheelchair users, disabled parking spaces, web accessibility, etc. The DAC can be instrumental in piloting this effort at CDVA by conducting a “self-evaluation,” ascertaining critical areas in need of improvement and presenting the final recommendations to the Secretary.
 - Sue to invite Michael Paravagna, former Chief of Disability Access Section at Department of Rehabilitation and ADA Compliance guru, to provide the DAC with a training session on conducting an agency self-evaluation at our meeting in September.
 - One person each from ISD and Facilities should be assigned to the

DAC to ensure that all divisions within the agency are on the same page with regard to development of a transition plan. Presently, ISD, Facilities, EEO, and even Yountville have all been working on various issues related to accessibility, albeit separately. This should be a unified effort.

- The DAC could “survey” employees, customers and/or veterans with disabilities to identify areas of concern or those in need of improvement. This could be accomplished by way of a “suggestion box” or invitation to comment via newsletter. Recently, an employee of Lincoln Training Center (contracted janitorial service utilizing employees with disabilities) reported to EEO that HQ employees treat him and his co-workers in a dismissive, discourteous manner. It was suggested that the DAC might be able to do something to increase disability sensitivity/appreciation/awareness for LTC staff; e.g., highlighting their individual stories in a monthly newsletter, inviting their supervisor(s) and/or some of the staff to speak to the committee regarding their issues, having LTC staff provide HQ staff with tips or information for optimal communications/interactions/service via a newsletter. It was also suggested that Floor Wardens could be of assistance in relaying information of this type.

B. Disability Awareness Month -

- It was decided that the committee would purchase the 2007 movie, “Music Within,” a bio about the creator of the ADA, and show it to all staff during October as a one-day event for Disability Awareness Month. (The Secretary encouraged the DAC to review this movie before it hit theaters last year.) Refreshments could also be served.

C. Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities -

- The EEO Office is required at end of each fiscal year to report to the Legislature on the agency’s representation of employees with disabilities- our “disability parity number.” If the agency has not achieved parity with the Relevant Area Labor Force in its representation of employees with disabilities, then the EEO Office is required by law to put forth a plan of correction to increase the number of employees with disabilities within the agency which entails “hiring goals.” Over the last few years, the Department has achieved parity with the RALF and thus has not been required to put forth a hiring goal for persons with disabilities.
- DACs were created to assist agencies/departments and their EEO

Offices and programs in increasing numbers of employees with disabilities through recruitment efforts and removal of barriers to employment.

- The EEO Office/DAC should share this “disability parity number” info with the entire agency when this year’s report is complete.

III. Powerpoint Presentation- “Intro to Disability Awareness for DAC Members”- postponed until next meeting

IV. Future DAC Meetings Schedule-

- It was decided by those in attendance that meetings should be held monthly on Tuesdays. Sue to coordinate scheduling of those meetings.

V. Roundtable Discussion-

- The DAC should provide regular updates to all staff within the agency regarding DAC activities (e.g., e-mail updates).
- An editorial, or, “message from the DAC,” could be sent out to the agency via a newsletter to convey disability info from differing perspectives.
- The DAC is NOT a social committee and will no longer conduct fundraisers. All agency staff will be made aware of the true function and role of the DAC.